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87th plenary meeting
Thursday, 26 April 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tevi (Vanuatu), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 140 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/72/713/Add.4)

The Acting President: In keeping with established practice, I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/72/713/Add.4, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/72/713/Add.3, the Central African Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have made the payments necessary to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes due note of the information contained in document A/72/713/Add.4?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 65 (*continued*)

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

High-level meeting of the General Assembly on peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/707)

Draft resolution (A/72/L.49)

The Acting President: Before we proceed, I would like to appeal to all speakers to keep their statements brief and concise, in order to make maximum use of the limited time we have remaining for this high-level meeting. To enable all on the list of speakers to be heard, statements in plenary meetings should be limited to three minutes when speakers take the floor in their national capacity. As members will recall, in its resolution 71/323 of 8 September 2017, the General Assembly called for strict adherence by each speaker to the time limits in the Assembly, in particular during high-level meetings. Participants with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full statements to the Secretariat for posting on the PaperSmart portal.

Also in accordance with resolution 71/323, the "all protocol observed" principle is recommended, whereby participants are encouraged to refrain from the listing of standard protocol expressions during their statements. Bearing in mind the time limit, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace so that interpretation into the six official United Nations languages may be provided properly.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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I appeal for the cooperation of all speakers in observing the time limits for statements, so that all those inscribed will be heard in a timely manner.

Mr. Tiare (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016), both adopted on 27 April 2016.

This high-level meeting is timely because the many current challenges to peace ensure that there is no longer any need to demonstrate its relevance. It also comes after the publication of the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707), which describes the progress that has been made in the implementation of the resolutions and makes specific relevant recommendations, and for which my delegation commends the Secretary-General.

It is well known that the cost of conflicts to States and the international community is much greater than the cost of preventing them. We need to put particular emphasis on prevention in order to ensure that they do nor start, or at least that they are not continued or aggravated. Prevention must therefore be a primary objective, both for States and the United Nations, and it must be at the heart of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. This can only be done by joining forces from the national level to the United Nations, at the subregional and regional levels and through strategic partnerships, as the Secretary-General so cogently described in his report.

However, the fact is that peacebuilding and sustaining peace are the primary responsibility of national Governments, which must determine the necessary priorities and strategies by involving all sectors of society. But peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives can succeed only if they have sufficient, predictable, sustainable and consistent funding through the support of multilateral and bilateral partners and the private sector. Unfortunately, where the financing of peacebuilding is concerned, much remains to be done to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to countries affected by conflicts. My country therefore calls for increased contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund in order to meet the needs of the countries that require it. We must also avoid spreading our efforts too thin and over too many peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives by focusing on aligning national and regional strategies and resources on sustainable peace.

Like other countries of the Sahel, Burkina Faso is facing the challenge of maintaining peace, owing to security threats. We have therefore worked with our four partner countries in creating the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel), and we are playing an active part in initiatives aimed at ensuring lasting peace in the Sahel by establishing the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, whose mandate is to fight terrorism. The Force must be operational, because without security there can be no development and without development there can be no peace.

As a reminder, in October 2014 and in 2015, my country experienced a popular uprising and a political transition, and since then the Government has made preserving social peace its top priority. During that difficult period, my country received support from the Peacebuilding Fund through financing for projects. Today, the Government is undertaking institutional reform in order to strengthen democracy and governance, particularly through a number of initiatives, including an inclusive and permanent dialogue to ensure economic and social stability, which are preconditions for peacebuilding.

Those initiatives include the creation of a High Council for Social Dialogue and a High Council for Reconciliation and National Unity, whose objective is to achieve lasting peace through national reconciliation. We also have an emergency programme for the Sahel to set up essential socioeconomic and security infrastructure for people living in the northern part of our country. In order to build peace, we must address the root causes of conflict: poverty, exclusion, discrimination, the effects of climate change and so forth.

The many challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace attest to the close link between security, development and human rights. My delegation calls for the implementation of the Secretary-General's recommendations and for the adoption of a holistic approach to current and future reforms, because our ultimate goal is to achieve lasting peace by 2030. We must therefore strengthen partnerships, coordination and cooperation among the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to ensure better support for peacebuilding initiatives.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Indonesia thanks the President for this very important initiative on sustaining peace. It is an opportune time to have the discussion we are having today, given the many challenges the world is facing.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by the delegations of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Turkey, on behalf of Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Australia (see A/72/PV.83), and Mexico, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Sustaining Peace (see A/72/PV.85). We share many of the views that the Secretary-General presented in his remarks on sustaining peace and peacebuilding, and we welcome his report (A/72/707) in that regard.

As a country that has gone through its own transition to a peaceful and democratic State, Indonesia has borne witness to various challenges and opportunities in building peace. From our own experience, we learned that achieving peace is difficult, but sustaining it is even harder. Sustaining peace needs collective work, and this forum could serve as a great avenue for advancing our common work in promoting this agenda. It is clear that United Nations peacebuilding efforts are still facing the challenges of slow disbursements of funding, insufficient allocation to respond to real demand, the need to do more on prevention and the necessity of linking peace with development efforts.

Lasting peace cannot be brought about on the ground if the affected countries themselves do not take full charge of their destiny. We need to listen to those countries about what they need, especially as they make the transition into the post-conflict phase. We need to be creative in our approach to supporting United Nations peacebuilding. We need adequate and predictable financing.

Indonesia and Norway are coordinating peacebuilding financing in the Peacebuilding Commission. However, more must be done. We must build resilient communities. No one organ by itself can promote peacebuilding, sustaining peace or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Stronger and inclusive partnerships are therefore needed — partnerships such as those between the United Nations and the World Bank, the international financial institutions and regional organizations — to link conflict prevention and reconstruction with good governance and economic policies. We need economic incentives as tools for prevention, and we must ensure that development and poverty are adequately addressed, so that conflict will not be the viable alternative for many.

Prevention is the key word. Conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy are part of Indonesia's foreign policy. We believe in the power of diplomacy to prevent or bring conflict and war to an end, as well as to usher in peace. We believe in reconciliation.

Peace is not merely an absence of war. Peace is underpinned by activities that ensure long-term opportunities by which ordinary people, including women and youth, can sustain their lives in a decent way and ensure sustainable development with a view to preventing relapse into conflict. For its part, Indonesia will continue its peacebuilding efforts through South-South and triangular cooperation so as to complement ongoing international peacebuilding efforts. Thatincludes our efforts with our brothers and sisters in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Earlier this month, we convened the first ever Indonesia-Africa Forum in Bali, which brought together Indonesia and 47 African countries. It was a meeting that reflected a cross-continental partnership that goes back to the Asia-Africa Forum held in Bandung in 1955, which intended to transform those ties into robust economic relations. Partnership and working together are key to achieving sustainable development and lasting peace.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to peace. For truly lasting peace to be achieved, we have to ensure that no one is being left behind. We have to ensure that the United Nations system works. Every country, large or small, has a responsibility to contribute to peace and security, whether it is in the Security Council or not. As a family of nations, each of us has a role to play in helping each other to improve and enhance global peace. We have to make the system better so as to ensure sustained peace, and in doing so, all the 193 States Members of the United Nations have to contribute — not just the 15 members of the Security Council, irrespective of their type of membership.

We salute the Blue Helmets who preserve peace, and we also salute the many United Nations volunteers who help to build democracy and sustainable development. For its part, Indonesia has been contributing troops for 60 years, not only for preserving peace in conflict areas, but also in development capacity-building

and humanitarian assistance in disaster areas. War and conflict are not the only challenges to human security. There are others, including climate change, as experienced in many Caribbean and Pacific islands.

In conclusion, peace is all about humankind. Contributing to global peace and security is enshrined in the Indonesian Constitution, and it is clearly stated in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations that one of the purposes of the Organization is "to maintain international peace and security". Indonesia has contributed and will continue to contribute to this noble quest of humankind, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan, which attaches great importance to the topic of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, had expected His Excellency Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Chairman of the Senate of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to deliver a statement today. However, he could not be here with us, so it is with great pleasure that I will now deliver his message to the Assembly. At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, for having convened this high-level meeting on an issue of such importance.

We are living in a time of turbulence and upheaval. Each year brings new challenges such as sectarian strife, migration and refugee crises. Regions that had been considered relatively calm have turned violent and volatile. The arms race is raging, and wars and conflicts are undermining global security. Given those developments, the imperative for peace is growing. As peacebuilding and sustaining peace lie at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations, people around the world look to the United Nations for vision, leadership and action. We in Kazakhstan believe that the United Nations remains the most legitimate and inclusive multilateral body. Our country has for years been demonstrating its firm commitment to the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and has striven to enhance its cooperation with the Organization. For more than a decade now, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has been serving as a good example of political engagement and preventive efforts by the United Nations in our part of the world. I would like to offer our perspective on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including the practical steps that our country has taken to promote international peace and security.

For many years now Kazakhstan has been a staunch advocate of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. At the dawn of our independence, we closed down the Semipalatinsk nuclear-test site and voluntarily gave up our nuclear arsenal, and 29 August, the date on which the test site was shut down, has been proclaimed by the General Assembly as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. We believe that a more holistic approach should be taken to peacebuilding. To that end, Kazakhstan has proposed a comprehensive threefold strategy to address conflict: strengthening the security-development nexus, taking a regional approach and coordinating the efforts of United Nations agencies and structures.

We support the idea that sustaining peace is both a goal and a process. In 2016, the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, presented the international community with a manifesto, "The World. The 21st Century", which outlines guiding principles that the international community should take to heart and follow in order to eliminate the scourge of war. Confidence-building measures are a powerful part of the peacebuilding toolbox. As far back as 1992, in this very Hall, President Nazarbayev initiated the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia. Since then, the Conference, which includes 26 States, has emerged as a tangible factor in international politics. Clearly, diplomatic engagement and constructive negotiations should serve as the main means of resolving and preventing all disputes and conflicts. With that in mind, Kazakhstan has been hosting peace talks on Syria and on the Iran nuclear deal, acting as an honest broker and an unbiased manager.

Today, amid mounting sectarian conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, our world is in dire need of mechanisms that can facilitate genuine dialogue, based on a recognition of individual identities and respect for religious plurality and cultural diversity, one in which stakeholders can listen, hear and talk to one another. Since 2003 Astana has successfully hosted the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, bringing together the representatives of diverse religions as well as prominent politicians and heads of international organizations. We are grateful to the United Nations for its continued support for and involvement in our forum. We fully support the notion that the primary responsibility for implementing peacebuilding strategies lies with Member countries. Member States can improve the prospects for sustainable peace by

addressing and tackling social and economic as well as political challenges, engaging their various national actors and in particular creating opportunities for young people and women and promoting their empowerment. Inclusiveness should therefore be at the core of any peacebuilding strategy.

In conclusion, let me say that we should work together with patience and persistence on the tremendous challenge that peacebuilding represents for the entire international community. Only through efficient partnerships can we build long-lasting peace and security on our planet. As Dag Hammarskjöld said,

> "We should, rather, recognize the United Nations for what it is — an admittedly imperfect but indispensable instrument of nations working for a peace evolution towards a more just and secure world order". (*A/3594/Add.1, p.3*)

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The number and the level of the participants in this major event testify to the genuine interest in addressing the challenges that the United Nations faces in the area of peacebuilding. It is only regrettable that certain delegations have taken advantage of this forum and the opportunity it presents for conducting political public relations and making unfounded accusations. If we may, rather than stooping to their level of polemic, we will focus on the issue at hand.

We view United Nations peacebuilding assistance as one of the most important instruments in the Organization's arsenal for assisting States in dealing with the consequences of conflicts and preventing their recurrence. The United Nations has been involved in this type of action for many years now. Member States periodically conduct reviews of it in which they consider States' experiences, the changing realities and the proposals and recommendations in various studies and reports.

We thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his personal efforts and close attention to the problems of peacebuilding. By adopting draft resolution A/72/L.49, the General Assembly will be sending an important signal that Member States are ready to continue to discuss the recommendations in the Secretary-General's thematic report (A/72/707) on developing coherent approaches to the work of the United Nations in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, which are inseparably linked to each other.

I would like to talk specifically about the latter concept. In 2016, following a detailed discussion, the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted twin resolutions — resolutions 2282 (2016) and 70/262, respectively — on the review of the peacebuilding architecture. In those resolutions, Member States made clear what they meant by the importance of sustaining peace. First and foremost, they asserted that it required a common understanding on the part of all sectors of society of what must to be done to tackle conflict and its root causes, promote recovery and prevent relapses. All national stakeholders have a shared responsibility for peace, and the role of the United Nations, when necessary, is to help strengthen the capacities of the recipient country, given that it is the latter that has primary responsibility for all these processes. Since it is the host States that take the lead, any proposal for making sustaining peace a new area in the work of the United Nations demands additional discussion. Member States have not yet discussed any kind of agenda for sustaining peace and have taken no corresponding decisions.

As we all know, according to the twin resolutions, the United Nations is called on to assist States in sustaining peace at any stage in a conflict, and the earlier the better. Nonetheless, in general we fully support the importance of strengthening United Nations efforts to prevent conflict. That must be done in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in which it is clearly included, and the relevant decisions of Member States. It is important to emphasize that the States themselves play the leading role in this area as well, since it is their decisions that define the parameters of international support, if it is required at all.

Of course, prevention is better than cure, but a proper cure needs a proper diagnosis and the right choice of treatment, or the cure may be worse than the disease. We believe that every conflict has its own unique collection of causes. Each individual case requires a careful and impartial approach, patient analysis and the quest for an appropriate solution, above all at the national level. Cookie-cutter templates or universal indicators of potential crises can be incorrectly applied and may only do damage. There are all too many examples of that, unfortunately. Assistance from this international Organization should be aimed at eradicating the root causes of crises and facilitating reconciliation and development, not monitoring unclear parameters

on which there is no consensus. It is also crucial to ensure that Member States act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations rather than on the basis of contentious concepts such as so-called humanitarian interventions and the responsibility to protect.

I should also touch on the important issue of human rights. The Organization's 70 years of experience have shown that this topic is often distorted and politicized with a view to influencing national political processes. And yet interference in internal affairs is the most common cause of national and international conflicts today. The United Nations should have no part in that.

Human rights, development, and peace and security are unquestionably interlinked, but they are not directly dependent on one another. Development alone cannot guarantee peace, while peace does not necessarily ensure development. It is therefore important to take account not only of the interlinkages but also the different goals of such processes, as well as which United Nations body or organ is responsible for advancing understanding of them. It is important that the entities of the United Nations system concerned with peacebuilding, peacekeeping, preventive diplomacy, development assistance, human rights and humanitarian assistance strictly respect their mandates and refrain from encroaching on one another's areas of responsibility. That also fully applies to the functions of United Nations country teams and their leaders, the resident coordinators. We take a cautious approach to proposals for focusing their efforts on predicting potential conflicts. In our view, their priorities should be solving existing problems, eliminating the underlying causes of crises and building State institutions' capacity and effectiveness, not duplicating or replacing their work. Where peacebuilding assistance is concerned, its parameters should be defined by the priorities of the host countries, supported by a dedicated intergovernmental advisory body, that is, the Peacebuilding Commission.

We agree on the importance of ensuring adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for United Nations peacebuilding assistance. The Secretary-General already has all the necessary powers and instruments for that. In particular, he heads the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Within that body, he has the right to involve all United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. That would not only enable the mobilization of resources but would ensure a coordinated approach to resolving administrative and financial problems. The funds and programmes could in their turn make use of their experience of working with non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Such coordination would also help to prevent any duplication of effort.

Only an impartial, non-politicized and transparent approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace can ensure that efforts in that area are effective. It is important to ensure that such assistance is provided in support of the efforts of the recipient States, without mentoring or imposing cookie-cutter solutions. That is the only way that United Nations peacebuilding assistance has the chance to make a qualitative leap and help to achieve sustainable peace.

Mr. Elnour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my country's delegation would like to express its thanks and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting on the vital issue of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his report on the subject (A/72/707).

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/72/PV.83).

Working for peace has always been at the heart of international diplomatic efforts. In 1945 it led to the establishment of the United Nations with the aim of saving humankind from the ravages of war. The work of achieving peace at both international and regional levels is based on some fundamental pillars, the most important of which is respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as the charters of relevant regional organizations.

The large numbers of internal armed conflicts in many developing countries constitute a clear demonstration of the strong and direct link between peace and development. Weak development, or none at all, frequently results in armed conflict, which in turn prevents any sustainable development. It is a vicious circle. The General Assembly and Security Council twin resolutions on the subject (resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively) emphasize the close link between peacebuilding and sustaining peace and development. In order to avoid future conflicts in developing countries, therefore, efforts should be made to empower them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

development. We can therefore say that the first step towards empowering developing countries that are currently undergoing internal conflicts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals is supporting them in their efforts to achieve peace. Without that, any environmental, social or economic development is difficult to achieve, if not impossible.

My delegation would like to make a few preliminary suggestions on how to promote collective work with a view to achieving the ultimate goal of peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

First, structural changes should be made in humanitarian work, with a focus on helping people to get a decent livelihood, and by linking our humanitarian work with our efforts for peace, with a view to giving those who receive humanitarian assistance the possibility of a decent life while preserving their dignity and helping them to become producers rather than recipients of humanitarian aid.

Second, a foundation should be laid down for a new generation of peacebuilding operations based on two basic pillars: traditional, or what we call hard peacekeeping operations, and soft peacekeeping, which involves initiating support for programmes related to peacebuilding and sustaining peace from the beginning of establishing peacekeeping operations, and installing units in all peacekeeping operations aimed at furthering development. Moreover, a coordination mechanism should be established between peacekeeping operations and the United Nations country teams, coupled with more focus on the engineering component, such as building roads, digging wells and establishing facilities for providing basic services.

Third, the role of the United Nations in conflict mediation and resolution should be strengthened as soon as possible, while reducing the negative effects of conflicts as much as possible.

Fourth, strategic partnerships between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations must be strengthened.

Fifth, we must take into account the local environment in each conflict and provide innovative solutions and initiatives, in cooperation with the Governments of host countries and local communities, according to their needs and circumstances. Efforts should not be focused on certain fields involving donors while ignoring other vital fields that are indispensable for peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Sixth, we must increase allocations to the Peacebuilding Fund. In this regard, my country's delegation would like to support the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report.

Seventh, top priority should be given to choosing prominent figures who are highly qualified and have varied experience in the work of the United Nations in order to lead United Nations country teams in States where there are conflicts.

Our experience in the Sudan has shown us that lack of development, or weak development, is the basis for internal conflicts, which generate new conflicts that deplete a country's resources and prevent development projects from getting implemented. That tarnishes a country's image and undermines its relationship with the international community, preventing it from getting loans and investments from the private sector. The result is further poverty, deprivation and lack of opportunities, providing fertile ground for new conflicts. An effective way to prevent future internal conflicts and sustain peace in those countries is therefore to support development by investing in all areas so as to assist developing countries in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

The current situation in Darfur represents an opportunity to realize the new vision for peacebuilding and sustaining peace by transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, while addressing the root causes of the conflict in Darfur. This can be done through support to the United Nations country team, while transferring some of the resources available to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to support development efforts in the Darfur states, which have great natural and human resources that could, with the help of the international community, form a starting base for launching fast economic growth and unprecedented change in the region. This would provide job opportunities for young people, foster confidence among various sectors of the community and prevent harmful friction between farmers and herders, while establishing an environment conducive to the success of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

In conclusion, my delegation stresses the importance of the golden opportunity before the international community, as embodied in the United Nations, to

achieve peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Darfur. This would fulfil the aspirations of the people of Darfur and represent a successful United Nations experience, in reviving its role in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, which could be applied and utilized in other regions. My delegation hopes that the international community will not miss that opportunity. We reiterate our readiness to fully cooperate and coordinate with all regional and international partners in achieving this great objective. Let us all work towards a new dawn for the United Nations in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Ms. Beckles (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago commends the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting on the very important topic of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, especially at a time when peace is absent from so many parts of the world. As an important basis for our discourse, we have the twin resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council (resolution 70/262 and resolution 2282 (2016)) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture. It is noteworthy that the resolutions stress that Member States need to work better together to sustain peace at all stages of conflict.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore views this debate as a means for further strengthening multilateralism, which is a crucial vehicle for resolving the challenges associated with peacebuilding and sustaining peace. This is an important step in our efforts to deepen effective multilateralism, as the absence of multilateralism is itself a threat to peace. Nonetheless, we concur with the Secretary-General in his report on the subject (A/72/707), which emphasizes that sustaining peace is first and foremost a responsibility of Member States.

In 2015, in this very Hall, Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This landmark agreement was yet another testament to the triumph of multilateralism, especially as it emphasizes a people-centred agenda that leaves no one behind. However, its inclusive and ambitious agenda must not be lost in mere rhetoric. Trinidad and Tobago therefore supports the view that there can be no peace without development and no development without peace, and that there can be neither development or peace without respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The challenge before us is to make the world peaceful and secure. This is of particular concern to small States, which must rely on the international rule of law, the strict observance by all States of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and the collective security mechanism embodied by the Security Council for their right to a secure, sovereign and peaceful existence to be guaranteed.

For small States such as Trinidad and Tobago and indeed all the States members of the Caribbean Community, the maintenance of international peace and security, including peacebuilding and sustaining peace, are of particular importance. We are keenly aware that our sustainable development is intricately linked to the safety and security of our people. Trinidad and Tobago is located in a region that is affected not by armed conflict but by armed violence. Transnational organized crime and its global networks pose a daunting challenge to the security of States, especially small island developing States. In the Caribbean Community's crime and security strategy, transnational organized crime has been identified as an immediate significant threat. It attacks the functioning of State institutions, adds new vulnerabilities to governance and fosters instability. In doing so, it undermines the fundamental premises of our democracies — the rule of law, human rights and development.

Lasting peace can be achieved only if women become more involved in decision-making processes related to peacebuilding and post-conflict development. Accordingly, in recognition of the important contribution of women to peace and development, in 2010 Trinidad and Tobago introduced — and has since been the main sponsor of — resolution 65/69 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

Trinidad and Tobago agrees that significant linkages between financing intended for both peacebuilding and development are important to achieving sustainable peace and development. We encourage the development of innovative financing mechanisms, which could go a long way to helping countries gain access to financing for peacebuilding and development.

Finally, my country calls on all members of the international community to renew their commitment to working with Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to assist the United Nations in fully realizing our commitment to building and sustaining peace.

Mr. Milanović (Serbia): I thank the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, for the initiative he has taken in organizing

this important event. His endeavour is proof of his strong commitment to preventing conflicts and sustaining peace.

Serbia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (EU) (see A/72/PV.83). However, speaking in my national capacity, I shall now make a few additional points.

The consequences of the increasing number of conflicts and interconnected crises are far-reaching and fraught with social tensions and instability. They often result in threats and challenges that are increasingly complex and disruptive, and that become drivers of uncertainty for the future. Peace and security, development and human rights have always been at the core of the United Nations, but the complex nature of today's challenges calls for innovative approaches as we strive to find shared solutions. To that end, we must strengthen multilateralism and the role of the Organization, including by adapting its system to the needs of our time. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace are no exception.

Serbia welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707), which has been submitted pursuant to paragraph 30 of the twin resolutions of the General Assembly (resolution 70/262) and the Security Council (resolution 2282 (2016)) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, based on the principle that peace must be pursued at all stages of conflict in a more efficient and effective way. As conflicts emerge in various parts of the world at the same time, while peacekeeping efforts are often overburdened and overstretched, the role of diplomacy in prevention, mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts has become more essential than ever before. The report and the relevant resolutions provide a solid basis for further strengthening our common endeavours.

Conflicts rarely emerge from nowhere, and their root causes are many and far-reaching. The links between such issues as dealing with poverty, political uncertainty, food and water shortages and inequalities are critical to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and should not be addressed in isolation. Peace can be attained only if the promise of the 2030 Agenda is met. In the words of the Secretary-General, the 2030 Agenda is the blueprint of the common vision of society towards which the world is trying to move.

We are well aware that growth and development must be sustainable and take into account protecting the environment, eradicating poverty, ensuring gender equality and stopping violence against women and girls. There can be no growth or development without peace and stability, just as no long-term peace or stability is achievable without growth, development and respect for human rights. Serbia's experience over the past two decades has shown that the gravitas of this paradigm is all too evident and important. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peaceful and inclusive societies, the promotion of the rule of law at all levels, justice for all, and efficient and effective national and international institutions.

The importance of the regional and subregional perspective in addressing the issue of peacebuilding and sustaining peace cannot be stressed enough. Various international organizations have come to the Western Balkans for various purposes and at various times, engaging in promoting comprehensive processes that are essential to modern conflict resolution and peacebuilding. As a host country to a number of international and regional entities, Serbia understands and appreciates the need to work closely with key international and regional organizations to build new partnerships in a harmonious way.

In that context, I would like to reiterate what my country has said on numerous occasions. The presence of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is of paramount importance for ensuring stability in Kosovo and Metohija and for creating conditions conducive to a lasting and sustainable solution to that question. Serbia also appreciates UNMIK's engagement in creating the conditions necessary for ensuring security, prosperity and respect for the human rights of all communities in those locations. The contributions of other international organizations operating under the auspices of the United Nations, such as the Kosovo Force, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as specialized United Nations agencies, is also invaluable and highly appreciated. Their continued presence, especially that of UNMIK, in the southernmost province of Serbia is indispensable for the overall security and stability of the region and for the implementation of the agreements reached within the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

I would like to point out that the Serbian side in the dialogue has time and again confirmed its willingness to be constructive as well as its readiness to make

compromises that are often difficult to achieve. It has contributed to seeking mutually acceptable solutions to the many complex issues. We have embarked on the process in the belief that the solution to all outstanding issues in a status-neutral framework will contribute to peace, stabilization and the realization of conditions for the unimpeded progress of the Western Balkans towards EU membership. Only through committed dialogue will it be possible to resolve all outstanding issues and build a stable region.

In conclusion, we are all aware that the challenges facing many parts of the world are numerous, that security is fractious and intractable and that we need continuous commitment and hard work to address these issues. At the same time, however, we must not be discouraged or deterred by the distances that we may be called on to traverse. Indeed, as Secretary-General Hammarskjöld once said, we must never measure the height of a mountain until we have reached the top, for it is only then that we will see how low it is. To ensure that we are all part of a United Nations that is fit for purpose, our deliberations must be conducted in a transparent and inclusive way, and our sights must be firmly trained on the prize of peace.

Mr. Gimolieca (Angola): We are honoured to take the floor at this timely and important meeting on the imperative of building and sustaining peace, and we commend the President of the General Assembly for convening it.

Angola aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/72/PV.83).

I will begin by echoing the sentiment expressed by Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed at the Security Council open debate on peacekeeping operations, held on 29 August 2017 (see S/PV.8033). Implementing the sustaining peace agenda means putting Member States and their populations in the lead, giving priority to political solutions and prevention, and inclusively leveraging the United Nations three pillars — peace and security, human rights and development — in a mutually reinforcing way.

Prevention and peace processes must be rooted in national leadership and inclusive ownership, and they must be responsive to the needs and contributions of all segments of society, including women and young people as agents of development and peace. The nature of today's challenges requires us to pool all our efforts in favour of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. Accordingly, the fundamental role of women and young people in peacebuilding and sustaining peace has been highlighted in the twin resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 70/262) and the Security Council (resolution 2282 (2016)) on 27 April 2016. In this regard, I would like to emphasize the importance of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/707), which provides an overview of progress made towards implementing these resolutions and the relevance of his ongoing reforms in the areas of peace and security, development and management. Furthermore, these landmark resolutions advanced the concept of sustaining peace in strengthening the coherence of the United Nations system in its provision of assistance to national Governments throughout every stage of conflict.

Angola supports the work of the Secretary-General with regard to the reform process. Achieving sustained peace and sustainable development will require that we embrace strong collective actions and enhanced collaboration and partnerships, including with the business community, financial institutions, civil society and regional and subregional organizations.

Following a long period of war and devastation affecting its social, economic and human fabric above all, Angola is now living in peace and is making a bold effort to fostering economic and social development, as well as deepening its democracy. We may consider that this is a success that should make all the nations in the world proud.

In conclusion, I would like to ask the following question: Does it make sense that at the very moment that we are discussing the building and maintenance of peace, we are also creating tensions in other parts of the world?

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): I have taken note of the President's reminder concerning the protocol for this meeting. I stand by it and will proceed directly with my statement.

Three years ago, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a global framework for sustainable development guided by international commitments for achieving global peace and prosperity. The first target of Sustainable Development Goal 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions calls for a significant reduction in all forms of violence and

related death rates everywhere. Over the past two days, one speaker after another has expressed deep concern about the ongoing struggles to bring about a peaceful world, emphasizing the importance of prevention and highlighting the fact that peace is a precondition for development.

We seem to be on the same page as far as our aspirations for a world free of conflict are concerned. Yet news bulletins remind us daily that we are not meeting that target. Armed conflict and other forms of violence continue to see increased casualties among innocent civilians, including among our peacekeepers. I believe that we need to dramatically strengthen our collective efforts to refocus our attention on conflict prevention and on addressing the root causes of conflicts, sustainable development and human rights as a means to achieve peace. We must intensify our focus on conflict-prevention strategies.

We must foster the increased participation of women, young people and faith-based communities, including the private sector. We must mobilize adequate, predictable and sustainable funding. We must shift towards more inclusive policies that ensure more equal access to natural resources, basic services, security, justice, democracy and good governance. And we must invest in human resource development. These efforts will support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals for the benefit of all. There can be no sustainable development without peace, and there can be no peace without sustainable development. Let us take to heart the lesson contained in an ancient African proverb: when elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.

Namibia has been independent for 28 years now. Since we are reminded daily about the dire conflicts and situations across the world, I would like to offer the Namibian example as a reason for hope. Yes, our country continues to face challenges, many of which are the direct consequences of the long war, violence and deprivation of the apartheid system under which our people lived for decades. However, as His Excellency Mr. Hage Geingob stated at his inauguration as the third President of Namibia, our people have developed a new narrative to overcome the hatred of the past.

Namibians have been determined to implement a policy of reconciliation that has not been without its trials but that has seen much success in bringing our people together. It has resulted in increased solidarity, cooperation and trust. A stable environment has provided fertile ground for the Government to implement its development agenda with a view to improving the quality of the lives of the Namibian people. As a result, success has already been seen in higher levels of services in such areas as education and the reduction in maternal and infant mortality rates and the number of deaths caused by HIV/AIDS, among other things. At the international level, Namibia supports peacebuilding through its participation in a number of peacekeeping missions and through its leadership in introducing resolution 1325 (2000) emphasizing the role of women in peace and security.

Those are the effects of peacebuilding that we have seen in Namibia, thanks to the assistance of the United Nations and other partners. Concerning the situation in the region, it is a fact that we continue to have some way to go in overcoming economic and political challenges, but let us remember how far we have come. We remain steadfast in our resolve to overcome those challenges and ensure that in our struggle to lift people from poverty and hunger through economic emancipation, no one is left behind.

It is in that context that Africa has put in place its development blue print, Agenda 2063, which depicts the Africa we want. To that end, in our collective efforts to put Africa on a sustainable path of peace, we have decided to silence the guns by 2020. In and of itself, this is a contribution to general disarmament. It is important to view disarmament not only in terms of nuclear and chemical weapons, but also of small arms and light weapons, which are leading to misery and undermining peace and stability in the global South. We urge the global community of nations to join us in this important initiative.

In conclusion, I want to convey a personal belief of Namibia's founding president and father of our nation, His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, who reminded us that our common goals and objectives are achievable because a people united, striving to achieve a common good for all members of society, will always emerge victorious.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): I would like to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, for organizing this important high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

The timing of this high-level meeting could not be more appropriate, in the light of the unprecedented

challenges that the United Nations is facing in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security. All indications are that we are passing through a period characterized by growing geopolitical tensions among major Powers. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is becoming a major threat. Terrorism and violent extremism also remain a grave danger to international peace and security. Cybercrime and the possibility of disruption to critical infrastructure are nothing less than a nightmare. The spread of small arms and light weapons and the expanding activities of transnational organized criminals continue to foment instability around the world. Nevertheless, we are encouraged by the ongoing reform process that the Secretary-General is undertaking to make the Organization fit for purpose in responding to current security challenges.

In view of the enormous peace and security challenges that we are facing today, giving priority to conflict prevention is not a mere option; the concept of sustaining peace is also perfectly aligned with this important priority, and it has certainly brought about a new paradigm shift in the manner in which we should deal with peace and security issues. It is therefore encouraging to note that the proposed reform of the United Nations peace and security pillar has established prevention and sustaining peace as its overarching goal. In our view, this is important because it provides the necessary framework for coordinating a coherent response to root causes and violence in the various stages of conflict.

The President took the Chair.

We believe that the outcome of the reforms will enable the United Nations to develop an integrated capability to comprehensively tackle contemporary security challenges, among other things by minimizing duplicative structures and overlapping mandates, ensuring greater transparency and accountability, and improving planning and budgetary processes. We feel that this will ultimately strengthen the Organization's ability to deliver effective and efficient operational support in the field, including in complex security areas where peacekeeping and special political missions are deployed. That is why we welcome the latest report of the Secretary-General (A/72/707) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture and its recommendations.

It has been emphasized time and again that peace and security and development and human rights are inextricably linked, and that closer cooperation among various United Nations organs and other stakeholders is therefore required for building peaceful and inclusive societies. As the latest report clearly underscores, addressing institutional fragmentation and ensuring policy and operational coherence across the entire United Nations system are also absolutely essential to ensuring that conflict prevention and sustaining peace are placed at the heart of the Organization's work and activities.

However, we have to realize that we cannot achieve this end without making full use of the potential role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), particularly its convening, bridging and advisory role in tandem with the principal and relevant organs of United Nations. We should therefore scale up the PBC's contribution along those lines, and our continuous focus and engagement are needed to ensure that the Commission promotes an integrated, strategic and coherent approach. In this regard, we are encouraged by the recent comprehensive advice that the PBC has provided to the Security Council on a number of regional and country-specific issues. We are also encouraged to note that the Secretary-General's reform proposal underscores the crucial role of the Peacebuilding Support Office in linking the peace and security pillar with development and humanitarian efforts.

We believe that the United Nations cannot address the myriad of international security challenges alone. In order to achieve the end goal of sustaining peace, there is a need to enhance partnerships with such various stakeholders as regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, national Governments, civil society and private organizations across the spectrum of conflict cycles, which includes prevention, peacekeeping, special political missions, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. For instance, the peacebuilding efforts of the African Union (AU) in line with its implementation of the post-conflict reconstruction and development policy framework and the African Solidarity Initiative undoubtedly complement the work of the PBC. We hope that the joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security will be instrumental to further strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa. We also welcome the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the PBC and the Economic Community of West African

States, which provides a framework for cooperation and partnership in peacebuilding.

Ultimately, sustaining peace is, of course, a national endeavour, and the national ownership and inclusiveness of all stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector and civil society, are key to achieving the objective of sustaining peace. What is really required of the United Nations and international partners is help in building national and local capacities for sustaining peace. This has to be very well explained and understood by all so as to avoid any misunderstanding. Building the necessary confidence among Member States is absolutely crucial to facilitating the implementation and operationalization of the new approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Finally, we believe that there is a need for a change in mindset without which no number of structural adjustments or innovations can help us achieve the ultimate objective of making peace and security sustainable and avert what could otherwise be a calamity of immeasurable consequence. That should not be considered too difficult or complex to achieve, for a good start can be made by summoning our earlier commitment to multilateralism, without which the creation of the United Nations would have been inconceivable, and by reining in the short-sighted and undisciplined pursuit of national interest, which is central to the reasons for that creation and which the Second World War made a lesson to be ignored only at our peril. There is no doubt that this is a time when much wisdom is needed in relations among States.

Mr. López Lavado (Andorra) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level meeting.

Two years ago, the Assembly and the Security Council adopted twin resolutions on the review of the peacekeeping architecture (resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively). They emphasize the primary responsibility of States to promote peace and the importance of strengthening the Organization's work in preventing conflict.

Today we are witnessing a deterioration in the world's efforts to uphold the principles and values of the United Nations, and we therefore want to reiterate our commitment to peace and our support for multilateralism. The reforms proposed by the Secretary-General point the way to a more efficient and coherent Organization that is better adapted to the challenges facing the international community. We therefore express our support for his proposal (A/72/707) to focus his peace initiatives on improving prevention.

Andorra is one of the few places that has succeeded in maintaining peace for centuries. Our institutions have played a key role in consolidating lasting peace through a pact between those who had once waged war. That pact has indeed lasted, and it has been the basis of our history, in which our institutional architecture has cemented the unity of that instrument with a democratic and social rule of law. Despite our centuries-old tradition, we are aware that peace should never be taken for granted. We have a responsibility to support a culture that has peace as its purpose and foundation, with a commitment that must be nurtured, preserved and shared from a multifaceted and holistic perspective.

With regard to conflict prevention, education has been identified throughout this high-level meeting as a key ingredient in equipping children and young people with schooling and critical-thinking skills. Andorra is a country that has also made education one of its priorities, and specifically education for global citizenship. The promotion of a democratic culture that respects diversity, and of education for sustainable development and on human rights and gender equality, plays an essential role in forming attitudes and skills in our young people that promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts and thereby foster a culture of peace. The promotion of a culture of peace must also be accompanied by reform of the development system. Promoting sustainable development means, to a large degree, addressing the root causes of conflict. We therefore support the reforms proposed by the Secretary-General that seek greater efficiency and accountability of the United Nations development system, a new system that is capable of delivering greater results on the ground.

We share the view that peace means not only the absence of conflict but also the presence of the conditions and mechanisms necessary for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, such as sustainable development, prevention and respect for human rights. Andorra would like to join the international community in its efforts to promote, create and maintain the necessary conditions for sustainable peace.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): I would like to thank you, President Lajčák, for convening this high-level meeting to demonstrate support for

sustaining peace, the critical notion that peacebuilding goes before and beyond a conflict period and applies to all phases of conflict — before, during and after.

All parts of the United Nations system should be engaged in sustaining peace. We must recognize that peace is not the absence of conflict; it is not merely the silencing of the guns. Peace is built over time and often requires a wholesale reconstruction of the relationship between a Government and its citizens and among the citizens of a society emerging from or heading towards conflict. Peacekeeping missions alone cannot produce lasting peace. Missions can and should help create space for peace to take hold, but they must be part of a broader strategy. Most critically, Governments must also hold up their end of the deal. There can be no sustained long-term peace without political solutions and commitments on the ground, including to respecting and promoting fundamental human rights. If it is to realize peace, the United Nations must change how it does business. The United States strongly supports the Secretary-General's reform initiatives, which centre on the need for greater integration of all the parts of the United Nations system in order to ensure a more coherent, effective and efficient Organization.

We strongly support the Secretary-General's focus on conflict prevention. We must reorient the system to better head off conflict by addressing root causes before they lead to crisis. We support the Secretary-General's proposal to integrate the Peacebuilding Support Office into the Department of Political Affairs, an important structural change. We also encourage the Secretary-General to take action on his sustaining peace report (A/72/707), specifically including the creation of integrated strategic frameworks, United Nations development assistance frameworks and greater in-country cross-pillar cooperation. That is especially true with regard to human rights.

We also urge the Peacebuilding Support Office to serve as a more useful resource for Member States, by providing detailed best practices on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. However, we do not believe that throwing money at a conflict will result in peace. As a newer United Nations initiative still trying to prove itself, peacebuilding should be voluntarily funded and should not be tied to the peacekeeping budget. We should strengthen the operational ties between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The United States has advocated within the Security Council to include viable plans for the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

Liberia is a great example of the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission working closely together. The United Nations worked with the Government of Liberia and civil society to reach a plan that all parties could support. After almost 15 years of peacekeeping and successful presidential elections last year, the United Nations Mission in Liberia closed and the Liberian Government, in partnership with the United Nations country team, has taken the reins. That is a positive story for the United Nations to tell and it is a great model for it to use in future transitions. While every situation is different, the key ingredient to success is buy-in — by the host country, the security forces and judicial organs and the people in civil society, including women and youth leaders, human rights activists, experts in transitional justice and others. Peacebuilding helps bring everyone to the same table, and its convening power there presents an opportunity for all voices to be heard. Only when that happens can effective and lasting transitions to peace occur.

The United States is committed to the peacebuilding process and looks forward to working with all Member States to advance peace in our world.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for holding this important meeting on sustaining peace, with a view to finding a new approach to achieving peace and increasing our Organization's effectiveness so that it can keep up with the challenges of today's world. In that regard, we thank the Secretary-General for his report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707).

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace require programmes and mechanisms on human rights, development and the rule of law. Peace is not just the absence of war; it requires the creation of conditions that will help to sustain it. The Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes the Secretary-General's vision for reforming the Organization, with an emphasis on linking the reform process to its three pillars of human rights, development, and peace and security, with a view to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially where the role of women and youth in making and building peace is concerned. That vision requires strengthening all United Nations organs and entities and intensifying their efforts, by mainstreaming best practices and facilitating their mechanisms and their culture of work, with the aim of ensuring that the Organization can improve its effectiveness and its ability to face challenges, thereby

fulfilling the comprehensive vision of Member States for an Organization founded on the pillar of peace and security.

Under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, our Prime Minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, the Kingdom of Bahrain has emphasized a principled approach to promoting partnership and cooperation with all United Nations organs and bodies, because we believe in the role that our Organization has to play in bringing about a more stable and prosperous world.

In his address to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session (see A/72/PV.20), His Excellency Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, underscored the Kingdom's firm belief that establishing stability and security in the Middle East and the entire world requires a shared political will, as well as a serious collective effort by all to ensure respect for the basic principles underlying relations among States, such as good-neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of others and compliance with international conventions and instruments, so that together we can address terrorism, the greatest challenge facing us, and deter States, individuals and entities from supporting and financing it. That is especially important now because terrorism is no longer limited to terrorist organizations that we can confront and eliminate. Rather, it has become a tool in the hands of States determined to provoke crises in other countries in their pursuit of their own agenda. They have consequently become fully complicit partners in the commission of terrorist acts and a destabilizing factor for international peace and security.

Given the strategic importance of peace and security in our region, the Kingdom of Bahrain has established strategic partnerships with its allies and neighbours in order to preserve the security of the region, combat terrorism and protect international navigation and commerce routes.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain will continue to work with the international community and the United Nations to promote peace and security and thereby achieve sustainable development, with a view to benefiting the world and future generations.

Mr. Khiari (Tunisia): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this high-level meeting on building and sustaining peace. Today's challenging international conflicts, as well as the growing number of conflicts within and between States, call on us to draw lessons from our experiences, take stock of the measures we have undertaken and put prevention at the core of the mandate of the United Nations system.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his opening remarks (see A/72/PV.83), more must be invested in prevention. The $233 billion that countries have spent on humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping and hosting refugees should be redirected to strengthening early-warning mechanisms and championing regional and national leadership so as to foster resilience in societies. In that regard, we believe it is important to highlight five points that we consider key to effectively promoting and sustaining peace throughout the United Nation system.

First, as a number of speakers have highlighted, sustaining peace is a component of the three pillars of the United Nations work — security, human rights and development. In that regard, we believe that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an asset to all Member States, and we should consequently spare no effort in supporting the Organization's ability to implement it comprehensively, providing and devoting every possible means towards that end. It is hardly necessary to recall here that poverty, social exclusion and systemic inequalities fuel the recurrence of conflicts.

Secondly, we believe that promoting community-led initiatives aimed at strengthening social cohesion and finding grassroots-generated solutions to local grievances continues to be of paramount importance. The Secretary-General tied that notion to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically Sustainable Development Goal 16, and reaffirmed that promoting social cohesion, so that diversity is seen as a benefit rather than a threat, is an investment in sustaining peace. As societies become more multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious, people must feel that their identities are valued even as they feel a sense of belonging to the larger community. Communities and grassroots organizations are the best places to bring their needs to the fore and debate possible avenues to address them.

Thirdly, promoting sustaining peace is strongly linked to the leverage given to the role of women in addressing the root causes of conflict. We should opt to vigorously enhance their leadership at various levels and in various contexts. In that regard, we commend the 50 per cent increase in Peacebuilding Fund expenditures on programmes targeting women's impact on the ground. It is indeed pivotal to encourage their meaningful participation in the mediation process, as has already been said in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and in other General Assembly resolutions on mediation.

Fourthly, the Secretary-General sets out in his report (A/72/707) on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016), on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, options to increase, restructure and better prioritize financing for peacebuilding. The report identifies possibilities for innovative financing, including through cost savings based on budgetary partnerships between peacekeeping operations and the private sector. As Member States, we should carefully consider the various options proposed by the Secretary-General for a sustained and predictable response to conflicts.

Fifthly, as highlighted in the joint United Nations and World Bank report *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, a scaled-up system for preventive action could save between $20 billion and $70 billion per year. A focus on prevention should therefore be our priority and ultimate objective.

In conclusion, it is our duty to ensure, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the mandate of the 2030 Agenda, that prevention cuts across all the pillars of the work of the United Nations, so that we can work effectively to bring about lasting peace.

Mrs. Ighil (Algeria): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting, which constitutes a crucial milestone in our common endeavour for peace. I also want to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707), which demonstrates his steadfast and strong commitment to conflict prevention. We support his efforts aimed at placing conflict prevention at the heart of the United Nations peace and security agenda through his proposed mutually reinforcing reforms.

The adoption by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the landmark twin resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively) was certainly a turning point for the United Nations approach to conflict prevention, affirming the Organization's commitment to sustaining peace as an overarching goal and a process for addressing the persistent challenges of conflict and laying the foundation for durable solutions. In addressing the complexity of modern conflicts, we must recognize the importance of conflict prevention, early warning and preventive diplomacy by promoting a paradigm shift towards a holistic approach that gives priority to political solutions rather than managing conflicts once they break out, thereby underpinning the concept that sustaining peace encompasses all cycles of conflict and is the key to long-term stable and durable peace. To ensure the success of our collective peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts, we believe that the following elements are essential.

First, we must promote broad and inclusive national ownership and leadership, bearing in mind the specificities of each situation and country beyond a one-size-fits-all approach. Secondly, there is a need to overcome the current fragmentation of United Nations activities by bridging its work across its three pillars through a more coherent and sustained approach by the main United Nations intergovernmental organs, each from the vantage point of their responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations. Thirdly, we must address the nexus between security and development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Fourthly, more women and young people must become involved in conflict-prevention initiatives. In this regard, we welcome the creation of the African Union's pan-African network of women mediators, FemWise-Africa, which held its first Assembly in Algeria in December. Fifthly, predictable, sustainable and better-prioritized funding should be ensured in order to back up sustaining peace and conflict-prevention activities. Sixthly, United Nations partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, especially the African Union (AU), should be strengthened by promoting better coordination and interaction between United Nations and AU envoys, focusing on capacity-building and addressing the root causes and socioeconomic factors conducive to terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism.

In its active efforts to help to stabilize its immediate neighbourhood, Algeria endeavours to promote prevention and peaceful means for conflict resolution at both the regional and the international levels, by advocating for political solutions, mediation, inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation, in full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the unity and cohesion of peoples. We also continue to work to foster the peaceful resolution of conflict in Africa and advance African solutions for African problems.

After emerging from a national tragedy during the 1990s and winning its battle against terrorism, Algeria is trying to create the conditions necessary for stability and development and to address the root causes of conflict. Our civil concord policy and national reconciliation process initiated by His Excellency President Abdelaziz Bouteflika have significantly contributed to restoring peace and stability to the country. Algeria is currently implementing a preventive approach aimed at building a resilient and stable society. Deradicalization and the fight against violent extremism are key to achieving that objective. Our policy of deradicalization encompasses political, economic, social, educational, religious and cultural aspects. It is mainly focused on addressing all factors related to marginalization and exclusion and on promoting national reconciliation, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as social justice and equality of opportunity, women's empowerment, education and job opportunities for young people.

Finally, it is important to highlight that our deliberations on sustaining peace should be State-driven and conducted in a transparent and inclusive manner. Sustaining peace is first and foremost a responsibility of Member States, as the Secretary-General rightly pointed out in his report.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): We are truly grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening today's high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. When it was being planned, no one could have imagined the international context that we would be holding it in today.

Today we are all once again solemnly affirming our commitment to sustaining peace. But all around us unprecedented conflicts are evolving, accompanied by direct military aggression, provocations on a national scale, threats and bellicose rhetoric. Hundreds of thousands of people are being made to suffer because of the aggressive geopolitical ambitions of certain States. The world has effectively been sliding into a new cold war and is on the brink of the threatened use of weapons of mass destruction. According to certain specific formal indicators, a third world war is not merely possible but is already under way. Politics and military technologies today are such that war does not always take the form of mass battles involving tanks, armies, artillery, aviation and navies. According to some assessments, at least a third of all States today are in one way or another involved in combat operations, which is more than the number of States that participated in the Second World War.

We all recently witnessed events in Syria that constituted a blatant act of aggression against a sovereign State when a massive rocket strike was launched on Damascus, based on unproven allegations and bypassing the Security Council. That was also how the war in Iraq began in its time, and to this day someone is probably still searching for weapons of mass destruction there. The people of Syria have become hostages to this confrontation, and while for all intents and purposes the Islamic State has been defeated, there is no end in sight for the war.

The degree of confrontation between the most powerful States in the world has now reached a critical point. Accusations of the use of chemical weapons, manipulations and falsehoods at the highest international level, the spread of fake news, the unabashed persecution of uncooperative countries, sanctions and counter-sanctions — all of these have taken the situation to the point of absurdity. For some State leaders, war has become a method of political self-assertion. And this is all taking place against a backdrop of an utter crisis in diplomacy and in the United Nations, which is the main international organization called on to prevent and end international conflicts. In our view, among other things super-Power status implies and imposes a super-responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Otherwise the super-Power risks becoming a barbarian armed with a modern tomahawk.

Belarus has always adhered to the principles of a peaceful, non-confrontational policy in international relations. We are not only actively involved in implementing peace initiatives in our region, Eastern Europe, we are also donors to the cause of regional stability and security. As long ago as 2015, President Alyaksandr Lukashenko of the Republic of Belarus,

speaking at the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventieth session (see A/70/PV.15), suggested that we needed to hold a new, wide-ranging discussion on the principles for States' coexistence in the future and on the fact that our peoples' well-being and development are inextricably linked to the issues of ensuring universal peace and security. Implementing Belarus's initiative to recreate a comprehensive process to guide relations between East and West, similar to the Helsinki process, could give us all a chance at a future of geopolitical calm, peace and security.

A true struggle for peace — but a struggle, not a war — is particularly significant today. The political ineptitude of some State actors, alongside the extremist groups cloaking themselves in religion, against a global backdrop of accumulating weapons of mass destruction and increasingly primitive terrorist attacks that no longer require elaborate preparation or major financing — all of this is turning the whole world into a potential theatre of war. Responsible civilized States should not support conflicts, nor should they create new flashpoints of conflict or engage in wars of sanctions. They should learn once again to talk to one another, come to agreements, show political will, set their ambitions aside and unite in the name of universal peace and prosperity. Sustaining peace is in the hands of States themselves. Our common future depends exclusively on the good-faith efforts of every country.

Mr. Mounzer (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/72/PV.83).

The establishment of the United Nations gave the peoples of the world, who are cited at the beginning of the Charter, new hope for the possibility that the Organization could shoulder its principal responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security, sparing humankind the ravages and horrors of war, committing to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and preventing conflicts and address their root causes, with emphasis on the primary responsibility of national Governments for setting priorities, strategies and activities aimed at ensuring sustained peace.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes that in order to achieve peacebuilding and sustaining peace in our world today we must emphasize the following points.

First, there must be respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which stress the importance of upholding the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every country, as well as non-interference in their internal affairs. The question here is: How can all those important provisions be implemented while some States Members of the Organization ignore the Charter and the principles of international law?

Secondly, the sovereignty and independence of States must be maintained, and greedy countries must stop intervening in the internal affairs of other countries and attempting to change the ruling regimes by force through incitement and fuelling internal strife. The question here is: Have foreign interventions and external conspiracies established peace in many countries of the world or have they instead propelled those countries into a raging state of war, in which terrorists and mercenaries have sown the seeds of chaos and where people have been forced into displacement and migration?

Thirdly, foreign occupation, the main barrier to peacebuilding and sustaining peace anywhere in the world, must be ended. Foreign occupation is a threat to peace and security not just in the region where it occurs, but also to global peace and security. The question here is: How can we build sustained and comprehensive peace in our region when Arab territories have been occupied by Israel for decades and when the occupier has refused to withdraw from these lands, return them to their legitimate owners, or implement hundreds of international resolutions adopted by the United Nations, aimed at ending Israel's occupation of Arab territories — in which it carries out all kinds of violations and aggression against the people of the occupied territories, in addition to its direct aggression against my country, Syria — and requiring its immediate withdrawal?

Fourthly, the unilateral economic sanctions imposed by some States as a way of putting economic and political pressure on others must be lifted. They are a blatant violation of international law and of the principles of sovereignty and sovereign equality.

Fifthly, terrorism must be fought and the countries supporting it must be stopped from investing in it. Wherever it occurs, terrorism blocks any opportunity for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Moreover, terrorism is a cross-border and cross-continent

phenomenon that cannot be prevented from expanding unless it is opposed and uprooted at the international level. This calls for the assertion that no effort to counter terrorism can succeed if it goes against the purposes of the Charter and the principles of international law, and without prior coordination and full cooperation with the Governments of relevant countries.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish regime claimed from this rostrum the day before yesterday (see A/72/PV.83) that States must interfere to prevent conflicts and that if conflicts erupt, States must interfere to end them. What the Turkish Minister said is the ultimate hypocrisy, because his Government, together with those of other countries both inside and outside the region, has been the main driver of terrorism in Syria for more than seven years. It has opened its borders to terrorists from all over the world. It has established training centres for them on its territories and given them every kind of support for killing Syrians. It was the first to facilitate terrorist organizations' access to poisonous chemical materials within Syria so that they can commit crimes against Syrian civilians and soldiers.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Monsignor Grysa (Holy See): Peacebuilding is one of the most important activities of the United Nations and therefore deserves the full attention of the international community. The Holy See would like to underline five priorities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

First, the United Nations can and should recommit to its peacebuilding efforts and to scaling them up, including by ensuring the unified delivery of action across the board, developing effective transition and exit strategies, conducting continuing analysis, promoting stronger synergies and coherence and constantly adjusting its responses.

Secondly, as an integral part of preventive diplomacy, the international community should focus on institutional capacity-building in States where there are situations of potential or impending conflict, a step that is also key to safeguarding successful transitions from conflict to lasting peace.

Thirdly, to build sustained peace, illicit flows and accumulations of weapons must be firmly addressed. Ending the arms trafficking and illicit financing that directly or indirectly contribute to corruption and to the commission of atrocity crimes is an essential element in sustaining peace.

Fourthly, inclusivity is a crucial aspect of sustainable peace. Conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding processes and efforts should involve all sectors of society. Women should play an active role across the whole spectrum of conflict prevention and resolution, as well as post-conflict peacebuilding.

Lastly, the success of the transition from conflict to building and sustaining peace demands that we seriously address issues of justice and accountability. Justice and legal accountability are essential vectors for reconciliation, not its opposite. Failure to ensure justice and put an end to impunity can sabotage post-conflict peacebuilding efforts and eventually rekindle conflicts, thereby arresting development and violating human rights.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the accomplishments of United Nations missions in preventing or ending conflicts afflicting many parts of the world, thereby greatly contributing to building the sustainable peace and stability that enable development and respect for human rights to flourish. The Holy See reiterates its commitment to collaborating wherever possible in the work of conflict prevention and resolution and of building sustainable peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting, and the Secretary-General for his report (A/72/707) pursuant to the 2016 resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on the review of the peacebuilding architecture (resolutions 70/262 and 2262 (2016), respectively).

Some may wonder what the representative of a nation that has not experienced a day of genuine peace in decades, and that has endured one of the most protracted conflicts and the longest occupation in modern history, could have to say about sustaining peace. But our position is based on that very experience, because, having been deprived of it for so long, we know how invaluable peace truly is and how fundamental to all aspects of life.

The efforts and means needed to prevent conflicts are infinitely fewer than those needed to resolve a

conflict once it has erupted, with all its immediate and long-term effects. We can therefore only agree with the vision of the Secretary-General, which places prevention at its heart.

The attention span of the international community has proved increasingly hard to sustain. There are too many crises, too many cold conflicts and too many violent conflicts, so we address the most urgent of them instead of adopting a more holistic and strategic approach. Diplomacy cannot just follow the news cycle; it must be able to assess early warning and engage and address situations before they make it into the news, and long after they have disappeared from television screens.

Peacebuilding, human rights and development are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Failure to act on one deeply affects the others. Accordingly, consistent and sustained efforts are needed on all three fronts, including by addressing the root causes of conflicts, upholding international law, ensuring accountability and reinforcing multilateral mechanisms and responses. Such efforts must be inclusive and involve the United Nations, intergovernmental bodies, Governments and civil-society organizations. Moreover, they can only gain from the involvement of women, with their important perspective and their ability to contribute to peace efforts, and of young people, who have a right to build their world and whose energy can change the present and shape the future.

In the absence of peace, the Palestinian people continue to be denied their rights and to suffer an acute crisis of protection and accountability, as well as a crisis arising from a failure of multilateralism. Palestine suffers from double standards, from an à la carte approach to the implementation of Security Council resolutions and from Israel's exemption, which for decades has allowed it to escape accountability for its systematic breach of those resolutions. The lack of enforcement of the long-standing international consensus enshrined in the United Nations resolutions on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and a just peace has allowed Israel to entrench its occupation instead of ending it. Our tragedy has proven over and over again that impunity is the enemy of peace. It undermines the credibility and authority of the international system, born of the horrors of two world wars and designed to prevent their recurrence and to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, but which has failed to do so.

We must revive and recommit to the ideals underpinning our international system, and uphold the law so that we may all know sustainable peace. Peace is the noblest cause and the most powerful, positive change agent. We have a duty to achieve and preserve it across the globe, and Palestine pledges to play its part in that endeavour, in our region and beyond.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Caroni (Inter-Parliamentary Union): When Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, who spoke here on Tuesday (see A/72/PV.83), received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016, he said in his acceptance speech,

> "That is the great paradox I have found: while many who have not suffered the conflict in their own flesh are reluctant to accept peace, the victims are the ones who are most willing to forgive".

What we learn from that is that it is important to listen to the victims and their ability to reconcile, because without dialogue between current and former antagonists, reconciliation remains impossible, as does sustaining peace.

But of course antagonism and diverging interests are inevitable in any society, which is why it is so important to have platforms to address such divergences constructively and, if possible, with a view to finding a compromise, and without violence, needless to say. At the national level, the most prominent and influential platforms for such dialogue are usually parliaments. For that reason, I can hardly imagine a better ally for the United Nations sustaining peace agenda than parliaments.

But as the United Nations moves forward in reorganizing itself to better prevent conflicts around the world, parliaments and parliamentarians are often missing from key United Nations debates and reports. This high-level meeting is a noteworthy exception, and the thanks of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) go to you, Mr. President, for your kind invitation. However, it often seems that such debates are more focused on partnerships with civil society or the private sector, despite the fact that parliaments are the central institution through which the will of the people is, or ideally should be, expressed. Parliaments have a key role to play in sustaining peace, be it helping to prevent

conflicts or contributing to reconciliation in post-conflict situations.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union was itself founded to promote dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Sustaining peace within the IPU falls under the mandate of its Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, which prepared a resolution on sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development. The resolution, which was facilitated by two rapporteurs, Mexico's Senator Rojas Hernández and myself, from Switzerland, was adopted unanimously by the IPU Assembly in March. It is a good illustration of what parliaments can do to help achieve the sustaining peace agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The resolution highlights the importance of national ownership and the need for inclusivity in peacebuilding and development. It therefore calls for greater partnerships and a meaningful involvement of parliaments in the implementation process, since they guarantee inclusive decision-making processes, sponsor active dialogues within communities and work with civil society to oversee political processes. In parallel, the resolution calls on parliaments to make use of their relevant lawmaking, oversight, budgetary, representative and electoral functions to facilitate the adoption of enabling legislation, including key budget laws, and to monitor and ensure the efficient implementation of the sustaining peace and development agendas.

The IPU, in its own right, also supports peacebuilding, while helping parliaments to mature into more democratic and robust institutions. The IPU makes use of parliamentary diplomacy as well. To that end, the IPU offers its good offices and provides a neutral venue for members of parliament to exchange views and experiences and discuss conflicts within and between countries. Moreover, the IPU assists parliaments in dealing with various threats to security and taking action on counter-terrorism and disarmament. It does so by raising awareness and encouraging an exchange of views among parliamentarians and by providing technical assistance to strengthen the different capacities of parliaments.

In my view, at its core, sustaining peace is about inclusiveness. Who would be better suited than parliaments to provide it, given that parliaments are the forums where the different needs of society are, or at least should be, addressed?

In conclusion, we believe that parliaments have a lot to offer when it comes to sustaining peace. I therefore ask all the relevant sustaining peace actors — at the national, regional and global levels — to keep parliaments in mind. In turn, I can promise that we parliamentarians will keep all the other actors in mind too. Together, we can move forward.

The President: I now call on the observer of the University for Peace.

Mr. Rojas-Aravena (University for Peace) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting.

New and old threats have become intertwined in the dynamics of conflicts. Such conflicts have increasing costs, while fewer and fewer resources are allocated to the sustainability of peace. Conflicts and complex crises require better analysis, forging shared viewpoints and anticipatory actions, which provide better opportunities for prevention, as highlighted by Secretary-General António Guterres and our documents related to peacebuilding and sustainability. In the current context of global interdependence, it is necessary to visualize and establish operational platforms so that the mutually reinforcing link between peace and security, development and human rights can be transformed into specific actions that contribute to the de-escalation of domestic, regional and international tensions.

Education, accompanied by multilateralism, constitutes the key tool for confronting those tensions. In a society divided by and caught up in conflict, education for peace is required. That means education for non-violence, inclusion, social cohesion, the rule of law, legality and ethics — in short, education for sustainable peace and prevention. It is essential to provide education that promotes skills, values and behaviours that contribute to peace, justice, sustainable development, democracy, human rights, solidarity and the protection of the planet.

Without a new generation that has the value of peace in its hearts and minds, societies will be condemned to repeat past cycles of conflict and violence. Without peace there is no possibility of exercising our rights. Without peace, human rights are profoundly violated. There is no development in the absence of peace. Without development there is no growth or prosperity, which creates more poverty, more inequality and more tension. Ultimately, it exacerbates and compounds

crises, violence and conflicts. Building sustainable peace is essential. Multilateralism is dialogue for peace.

Achieving the sustainability of peace requires prevention. It requires the development of new leadership and holistic educational policies on the different trends that mark conflicts and complex crises. Prevention must address the root causes of conflict and violence and understand their consequences.

We at the United Nations University for Peace anticipate that complex intranational crises will become more serious and will become the fundamental factor of conflict in the future, as they are connected to global crises such as climate change. We need to provide broad and efficient education on prevention in order to achieve the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The University for Peace puts the pillars of the United Nations at the centre. In that context, it highlights the importance of women and young people in conflict prevention, reconciliation and post-conflict situations. The University for Peace develops education on prevention. It reaffirms its commitment to such tasks in its master's, doctorate and training courses, as well as its publications. The University for Peace is educating and training leaders for prevention, mediation and the transformation and resolution of conflict and post-conflict situations in order to achieve a future with sustainable peace. If we want peace, let us work for peace.

The President: I now call on the observer of the International Development Law Organization.

Mr. Civili (International Development Law Organization): As the world's only intergovernmental organization devoted exclusively to advancing the rule of law and access to justice, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) welcomes this opportunity to contribute to this high-level meeting.

Access to justice and the rule of law lie at the heart of inclusive and sustainable development. They are also critical to building and sustaining peace. Many root causes and drivers of conflict, such as discrimination and exclusion, unequal distribution of public goods and natural resources, human rights violations, corruption and lack of accountability, issue from or are exacerbated by the absence of the rule of law.

For peace to take hold, people must have confidence in justice institutions. By promoting equality and access to justice, protecting the vulnerable, ensuring equitable access to resources and services, providing the means for fair and transparent adjudication of disputes, encouraging peaceful collaboration and punishing violence, the rule of law helps to build stability, resilience and public confidence in constitutional processes, and to strengthen trusts in laws and institutions. The rule of law serves to encourage an environment conducive to trade, investment and economic growth that generates jobs, which, especially when targeted to unemployed young people, can reduce the risk of social unrest and violence.

The value of the rule of law to peacebuilding and sustaining peace is evident. Its implementation, however, is fraught with many challenges. That makes this high-level meeting and the proposals of the Secretary-General all the more vital.

IDLO works in fragile and conflict-affected countries in every region in the world. Based on that experience, I would like to make four key points.

First, meaningful and sustainable justice-sector reforms are possible only when they are nationally led and owned, tailored to the specific context and inclusive in approach. Our work, and that of other organizations, shows that community-level engagement and the participation of marginalized groups, such as women, youth and historically excluded minorities, helps a great deal in building mutual trust and confidence.

Secondly, like other aspects of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, rule-of-law initiatives benefit when they are both top-down and bottom-up. That means supporting capacity development for institutional and legal reforms, on the one hand, and the legal empowerment of justice seekers, on the other. Legal empowerment not only enhances access to justice, but also contributes to building trust and confidence in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

Thirdly, justice-sector reforms require greater and more sustained investment. Short funding cycles and unrealistic time frames not only fail to achieve targets, they risk creating a perverse negative impact by alienating stakeholders when they fail to deliver what they promise. IDLO welcomes the Secretary-General's emphasis on sustained efforts and adequate resources for peacebuilding.

Finally, as the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/707) notes, restructuring global peace and

development efforts calls for the active involvement of a wide range of international, regional and national actors. IDLO has partnered successfully with United Nations political missions and development programmes in some of the most fragile and conflict-affected countries. We look forward to further deepening and broadening our collaboration with the United Nations system and Member States to build and sustain peace.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in this high-level meeting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.49, entitled "Follow-up to the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.49?

Draft resolution A/72/L.49 was adopted (resolution 72/276).

The President: I would like to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, and Her Excellency Ms. Audra Plepytė, Permanent Representative of Lithuania, who ably and patiently conducted the discussions and complex negotiations in the informal consultations on resolution 72/276. I am sure that the members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

I would like to start my concluding remarks with a simple message: I sincerely thank members. Whether delegations travelled from abroad or were already in New York, participated directly or worked behind the scenes, they have all shown their commitment to sustaining peace, and, because of them, this high-level meeting was a success.

First, we increased visibility and awareness. As I said on Tuesday (see A/72/PV.83), this meeting has attracted the highest levels of attendance seen at the United Nations this year.

Secondly, we followed up on our promises. We made sure that the 2016 resolutions on sustaining peace (resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)) were not one-off measures but the start of a new approach to peace. The resolution we have just adopted, and my Chair's summary, will drive this process forward.

Thirdly, we have gained more understanding, more lessons learned and more ideas for the future. Let me mention them in more detail.

First, with regard to our understanding of peace, we have talked a lot over the past two days about how we see and understand peace. We said that peace is more than a ceasefire; it is more than a peace deal; and it is more than the absence of war. That means that one-off operations or activities are not enough to achieve it. Instead, we need to tackle conflict at its roots. We need to look to the horizon to see the warning signs. We need to build a culture of peace and a culture of prevention.

Sustaining peace is not an easy task. I think that was highlighted by the President of Colombia, who said that it is more difficult to build peace than to silence the guns (see A/72/PV.83). However, it is not a task we are shying away from. Instead, we are stepping up to take it on.

A second achievement came through the lessons we learned, and I will mention four areas in particular.

First, with regard to prevention, our discussions showed that prevention is not an abstract concept. It has happened; it is happening; and it can happen again. Many participants shared their experiences with mediation and diplomacy. For example, we heard about how mediation helped Montenegro to remain stable and peaceful at a time of regional instability. We also talked about longer-term prevention, which turned our focus to sustainable development, economic growth, institution-building and respect for human rights. It is clear that we are beginning to view those areas through a lens of prevention. That is why successful poverty reduction in Peru was held up as a contribution to sustaining peace.

Secondly, with regard to coherence, we learned that a more coherent approach is already evident at both national and international levels — in the Gambia, for example, where sustaining peace is central to the country's national development plan; or in Malawi, where United Nations development and political actors came together to support the national peace architecture; or in New York, where the Peacebuilding Commission is building bridges across the three pillars of the United Nations.

Thirdly, with regard to national ownership, we were all on the same page. We agreed that sustaining peace does not stand a chance unless it is driven by national

actors. Lessons from the Philippines showed us the need to complement rather than replace national cultures, sensitivities and policies. And we were reminded that national ownership made sustaining peace a reality in Côte d'Ivoire.

Finally, the message of "inclusion, inclusion, inclusion" could not have been clearer. When we widen the space — when we pull more chairs up to the table — we see the results. One example mentioned pertained to women in Liberia. When women have had a platform and a voice, they have used it to prevent the country from sliding back into war. Young people in the Balkans was another example mentioned. Even years after conflict, they continue to work for reconciliation. We also heard about religious leaders in Afghanistan who have used their influence to advocate for peace. And we learned that civil society in Sri Lanka had helped to design the national reconciliation process.

Sustaining peace cannot be limited to this Hall. We need to open our doors wider, and that includes the private sector. As we heard in a video message from Sir Richard Branson, businesses must play a greater role in making our planet more peaceful.

A third major achievement of this meeting came through our ideas for the future. We reviewed our toolboxes and we chose many tools, which we can use more frequently and more efficiently going forward, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for example. The Secretary-General called it the common blueprint for more peaceful, stable, resilient groups of societies. However, we need to do more to fully grasp its preventive potential.

Peace operations are another example. In that regard, I want to repeat the call, made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to look closer at how such operations can better support sustaining peace or inclusion, because that can be both an aim and a tool. We can act on the recommendations of the recent progress study on youth, peace and security. We can pay more attention to the gender aspects of other tools for sustaining peace, including conflict analysis. Regional organizations also have their own toolboxes. The United Nations must learn from those and support them.

Finally, when we talk about tools for the future, we cannot ignore financing. Many speakers drew attention to the proposals outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/707). They urged us to consider them seriously. Others spoke up loudly in support of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. Our interactive discussions also generated some exciting ideas about financing for sustaining peace. That is only a fraction of our wider toolbox. I hope to capture more in my summary.

This was a successful high-level meeting. But we cannot speak only about success. The realities of peace for many people on the ground are too horrific and the signs that things could get even worse are all too clear. There are challenges and concerns. It is up to all of us to act in response, not only those of us who live with conflict, who have a vested economic or social interest or who have the time or the money, but every single one of us.

Our shared responsibility is clear. In fact, it is the basis of the Charter of the United Nations. In the words of the President of Ireland, it is a most profound political and moral responsibility not only to the citizens of our own nations but to the peoples of other nations. We all signed up to it. That is why sustaining peace rests on all our shoulders, why we all have an interest in achieving it and why we all stand to lose if we decide to go down a more dangerous path alone. We must embrace our political and moral responsibility. We must keep the promises that we made in 2016. We must bring sustaining peace out of this Hall to the people on the ground.

I would like to inform Member States that in due course I will circulate a summary of the proceedings of the plenary meeting and the interactive dialogues held during the high-level meeting.

Several delegations have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I would like to remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Sahraei (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to exercise my right of reply in response to the unfounded remarks made about my country by the representatives of Saudi Arabia (see A/72/PV.86) and Yemen (see A/72/PV.85).

I would like to note that Saudi Arabia's military acquisitions and intervention in Yemen represent the main underlying reason for the escalation of the crisis and for the human tragedy in that country. In such a situation, the claim that Iran intervenes in the internal

affairs of Yemen is a naive and false scenario aimed at deflecting the attention of the international community from the war crimes committed by the Saudi-led coalition against the innocent Yemeni people.

We are of the view that the crisis in Yemen has no military solution. It can be resolved only through a ceasefire and inclusion. As you, Mr. President, rightly said in your closing statement, inclusion, with the participation of all Yemeni parties and groups, is a prerequisite for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Yemen. Iran's fundamental policy is based on the peaceful settlement of conflict and the establishment of stability and security in the region. In line with that policy, in his statement in this Hall on the first day of the general debate, the Iranian Foreign Minister urged the countries of the Persian Gulf to join an initiative to set up a dialogue for regional cooperation (see A/72/PV.83). My delegation would like to once again reiterate the importance of that initiative as a valuable means to advance long-lasting stability in Yemen and other parts of the region.

With regard to the correct name of the body of water between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, I should remind the representative of Saudi Arabia that the traditional term "Persian Gulf" has been the correct appellation for that body of water since about 500 B.C., and it will remain so forever. It is a standard geographical term, recognized by the international community, including the United Nations, and should not be tinkered with because of the political projects and day-to-day wishes of this or that ruler.

Mrs. Koçyiğit Grba (Turkey): The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs made a statement on behalf of our country on peacebuilding and sustaining peace during the initial segment of the high-level meeting (see A/72/PV.83). I have asked for the floor in exercise of the right of reply.

I reject the statement by the representative of the Syrian regime in its entirety. As usual, it contains only distorted facts and baseless accusations against my country. The regime, which long ago lost its legitimacy, is ruthlessly massacring its own people by employing all imaginable instruments of force and violence. Those actions represent war crimes and crimes against humanity. We are appalled that such a regime, which has the blood of innocent people on its hands, can dare to take the floor in the context of a meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Eventually, those responsible for the destruction of Syria and the suffering of the Syrian people will be held accountable for their crimes. Until then, Turkey will continue to stand by the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Our delegation would like to exercise its right of reply with regard to what was mentioned by the representative of the Turkish regime.

The Turkish regime has exploited Turkey's full capacities, in cooperation with other States and regimes inside and outside our region, in order to support terrorist organizations, in particular Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations affiliated with them. In fact, the Turkish regime opened Turkey's borders to terrorists and established training centres for them on Turkish territory, assisting them with training in the use of toxic chemical weapons. The Turkish regime also facilitated the entry of all kinds of weapons, including toxic chemicals, to Syrian territory so that those terrorist groups could use them against civilians in Syria.

The Turkish regime continues to support, finance and arm the terrorists on Syrian territories. I would like to mention a book entitled *ISIS Defectors: Inside Stories of the Terrorist Caliphate*, by Ahmet Yayla, who headed the counter-terrorism division in Sanliurfa, Turkey, between 2010 and 2013. In his book, he wrote:

> "In my capacity as the Chief of the Counter-terrorism Division, I personally witnessed in 2013 that the Turkish hospitals in the south-east treated free of charge members of the terrorist Da'esh organization who had been injured. I also saw that those terrorists were protected in most cases by Turkish police. During my work as chief of security, I received instructions for providing injured combatants with security services. In August 2014, the man who was the right arm of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi and six men of his group were injured during an air strike. They received treatment in a private hospital in Sanliurfa, southern Turkey. Doctors in that hospital told me that the Turkish Government covered all their expenses."

This is a Turkish writer who refers in his book to the terrorist acts perpetrated by the Turkish regime, namely, violating all Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism by providing support to terrorists inside Turkey. Now the city of Gaziantep is called the Turkish Tora Bora. It has become a safe haven for terrorist

groups and where they undergo training and conduct tests on using toxic chemicals, which are transferred, with the help of the Turkish regime, to Syria, where they are used against civilians in my country.

Mrs. Koçyiğit Grba (Turkey): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor one more time. I will not take up your valuable time, and I will not honour the Syrian regime's representative by addressing the details of his statement, which we reject in its entirety.

The President: I declare closed the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 65.

Agenda item 99 (*continued*)

General and complete disarmament

(cc) Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament

Draft decision (A/72/L.50)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/72/L.50, entitled "United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/72/L.50?

Draft decision A/72/L.50 was adopted (decision 72/556).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (cc) of agenda item 99.

Agenda item 114 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of twenty members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/612/Add.1)

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450, of 17 December 1987, and upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Members will recall that, at its 71st plenary meeting, held on 11 December 2017, the General Assembly elected 17 members to the Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2020.

Members will also recall that, by its decision 2018/201 B, of 5 December 2017, the Economic and Social Council postponed the nomination of one member from among the Group of African States, one member from among the Group of the Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from among the Group of Western European and other States for election for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2020.

In that connection, the Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/72/612/Add.1. As indicated in that document, by its decision 2018/201 E, of 16 April 2018, the Economic and Social Council nominated Chad and Italy for election by the General Assembly to fill outstanding vacancies in the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a term of office beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on the basis of dispensing with the secret ballot?

It was so decided.

The President: The number of States nominated from among the Group of African States and among the Group of Western European and other States is equal to the number of seats to be filled in each of those groups.

May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare Chad and Italy elected as members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a term of office beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020?

It was so decided.

The President: I congratulate Chad and Italy on their elections as members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Members are informed that the Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2018/201 E, decided to further postpone the nomination of one member from among the Group of Western European and other States for election by the General Assembly for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2018, and one member from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for election by the Assembly for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 114.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.